

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture



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NEW BENDIGO LABORATORY TO TARGET ANIMAL VACCINES

Bendigo is set to become a national hub for vaccine development to improve animal health with a new state-of-the-art laboratory, thanks to new funding from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Regional Development and Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Apiam Animal Health's headquarters in Bendigo to announce the company has received funding through the Labor Government's *Regional Jobs Fund*.

The new lab will be built on land adjacent to the company's Piper Lane headquarters and will manufacture custom or autogenous viral vaccines to fill a critical gap in the market, with only a few manufacturers in Australia.

Apiam currently makes autogenous vaccines for bacterial diseases in pigs, poultry and cattle where there are existing market gaps or no commercial vaccines available. The company is working with La Trobe University researchers who have developed new technology to allow for safe and rapid vaccine production.

The new laboratory will also enable Apiam to increase export of vaccines for the international market and is expected to create 40 new full-time jobs, with most to be based in Bendigo, almost doubling the total workforce to nearly 100.

Autogenous vaccines are designed to combat a range of diseases affecting livestock and play an important role in reducing the widespread use of preventative medications in stockfeed.

The new laboratory is expected to be completed by 2025 and will meet the highest biosecurity standards, incorporating a series of self-contained modular laboratories.

Apiam is the largest veterinary services provider to the Australian livestock industry. Nationally, it operates more than 70 veterinary clinics, diagnostic and vaccine laboratories, genetic centres and ancillary services.

The *Regional Jobs Fund* is part of the Victorian Government's flagship \$156 million *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund*, which helps businesses create more jobs in regional Victoria, supports community projects and helps councils to build the infrastructure locals need. More information is available at rdv.vic.gov.au/rjif.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development and Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"This state-of-the-art facility will enable vaccines to be manufactured locally to prevent biosecurity risks and better protect animals from viral disease outbreaks."

"This project underpins the sustainability and growth of agricultural businesses in regional Victoria, while creating dozens of local jobs."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"Apiam Animal Health is driving jobs growth in Bendigo, with a new laboratory to be built in town to develop more animal vaccines. This will open up new export markets globally and will future-proof our state."

Quote attributable to Managing Director at Apiam Animal Health Dr Chris Richards

"This new lab will increase our ability to deliver more animal health solutions to protect Victorian agriculture."

Media contact: Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | Nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au